

St. Martin's Lutheran Church Congregational Meeting DRAFT

May 21, 2023, in the Sanctuary

Called to order at 10:01 AM.

Stephen Ottmers

Invocation

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Background

Stephen Ottmers

President Stephen Ottmers provided an overview of the recommendations by the Financial Proposals Task Force to address our ongoing financial needs. The task force proposed immediate, medium, and long-term actions.

- Immediate term: Per Council-proposed Operating and School budgets, use Endowment Fund earnings and additional School revenue to cover the cash flow gaps that result from expenses exceeding income. Limit spending of the Child Care Relief Fund (CCRF) grant to \$150,000 to reduce the cash balance gap. (Completed)
- Medium term: List for sale the residential properties on West Avenue to pay off the remaining building debt. (Authorized at a prior meeting; in process.)
- Long term: List for sale or lease the 15th Street parking lot while retaining parking rights. Use the proceeds to fund the growth and financial future of SMLC.

Meeting procedures

Stephen Ottmers

- Only registered members of the church may speak and vote.
- Register in the narthex and receive a paper ballot.
- Background information was provided on the internet and at the welcome desk in advance.
- Only comments on the motion will be permitted.
- Limit discussion to 3 minutes.

Motion: Authorize negotiations with DMA for a ground lease of the 15th Street parking lot for 65 years. If unsuccessful, retain the parking lot as-is until the commercial market improves significantly.

Discussion

James Gavin: I appreciate the work that has been done so far. I support continuing to negotiate with DMA. I want to investigate the long term liabilities that may be associated with this project, such as taxes, what happens if DMA

goes bankrupt, the operation of worship park, and sharing the worship park with the community. These issues do not affect the motion today but should be considered in the contract.

Anita Salmon: I want to correct some of the information on one of the slides. The approved spending of the endowment fund was for the building fund, and the CCRF grant was for school. [This information conflicts with the task force proposal listed in the minutes from the January 15, 2023 meeting, provided above under “Background.”]

Ann Howard: DMA stands for Diana McIver and Associates. Diana has been a professional developer in Austin for over 40 years. She has over 2,000 apts under her governance. She is a lovely human. I have known her for 10 years. She develops affordable housing such as Wildflower Terrace in Mueller, the first senior apartment community I toured 10 years ago.

Voting

Stephen instructed members to write “for” or “against” on the back of the numbered cards provided at registration. The cards are anonymous. The volunteer tellers who will count the ballots are Bob Gibbons, Laura Raun Carroll, Debbie Mitchell, and Debbie Alkire.

Vote tally

86 votes for and 6 votes against. The motion passes.

Update on Strategy Task Force (Informational while awaiting vote tally)

Anita Salmon

In June, we will have sessions with the congregation to work more on the strategy and refine what the task force has come up with. We will explore questions such as:

- What is our purpose as a congregation?
- Why, in Fall 2021, did folks say that “the people” was the best thing about SMLC, and how do we capitalize on that?
- Where do we put our resources?
- What does it mean to grow as SMLC in the future?

Come to the single worship service at 10 AM in June and stay for the strategy workshops. They will be very interactive.

Leilani Plougmann

The Strategy Task Force has met several Sundays after church for a few hours. We have been reading about what draws people to church and looking at trends and alternatives people have for the use of their time. We have noticed that people like service opportunities and singing. We want to explore the following questions:

- How is the nature of the congregation changing?
- How is the community of Austin changing?

Adjourned at 10:23 AM.